Dear Readers:

One of the frequent comments I have heard is about communications. Some residents want more information about what’s happening in our town, and why it’s happening. Others want to be involved before recommendations are considered and Council makes decisions. Some are too busy to search out information, and others don’t want to be involved.

This newsletter is another step in improving two-way communications between Town Hall, its Council and staff, and you. In January, Council, led by the Economic Development Committee, launched our new website www.renfrew.ca. It’s all part of our commitment to listen, gather feedback, and communicate more effectively with residents, businesses, volunteers, organizations, and those interested in moving here.

Inside this newsletter, you’ll find highlights from 2016, some new 2017 programs, and proposed road reconstruction and LED street lighting projects. There are stories about economic development, keeping our community as safe as possible, and celebrating Canada’s 150th.

Our town has a rich heritage, and our community is defined by its generosity. We only have to look to the public support for the Renfrew Victoria Hospital and the Renfrew Hospice to name just two.

Sharing information is all part of strengthening our community relationships so we make the best decisions possible for today and tomorrow. Council and staff look forward to working with you in 2017.

Sincerely,

Mayor Don Eady

Our Coat of Arms and its motto, Let It Flourish, will continue to have a high profile. You will see it in ceremonial applications such as official presentations and plaques, and on Council agendas, minutes, resolutions, bylaws, and agreements.

As part of our economic development strategy, we have introduced a new logo. It’s part of branding Renfrew as modern and progressive town—and a town shaped by a history of visionary entrepreneurs. John Lorne McDougall’s grist mill, built in the mid-1850s and operating today as the McDougall Mill Museum, is prominent. The typeface represents the vitality of Renfrew today. The sweeping R symbolizes the Bonnechere River—important to our early settlement and our present; the trees symbolize the environment, sustainability, and the growth to which we aspire.

To minimize cost, the new logo will be phased in as items need to be replenished or replaced (such as stationery, forms, vehicles, signage, advertising, literature, e-communications, and displays).
Renfrew Detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) works closely with the Town’s Police Services Board to identify local concerns and address issues. The OPP uses a three-pronged approach: engagement, education and enforcement to identify who needs to be engaged, how best to educate the public, and enforcement when necessary. In 2016:

- All OPP members attended Road to Mental Readiness (R2MR) training as part of cultivating and sustaining a healthy workforce and supportive work culture.

- Technical solutions were introduced to improve productivity:
  - Civilian Data Entry—officers dictate reports for data entry into our records management system allowing more time to be dedicated to public safety initiatives.
  - Civilian Direct Reporting—residents can report certain types of occurrences via the internet at www.opp.ca.
  - All frontline patrol vehicles are equipped with in-car computers—part of the Mobile for Public Safety initiative.

- Focused Patrol initiatives, based on predictive analysis by the detachment analyst, enable the OPP to better deploy the right resources to the right place at the right time to prevent crime and victimization.

- The successful Safe Winter Driving Campaign and the Road Safety Challenge were made possible with support from the Renfrew Police Services Board and provincial grants.

The OPP is moving to its new location at 410 O’Brien Road by mid-February—a facility to serve Renfrew residents and surrounding communities for decades to come.

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### Firefighters Go Door-To-Door

To Keep Residents Safe

When Renfrew’s Fire Department isn’t responding to calls and making sure the equipment needed for the next call is in good shape, the focus is on keeping residents and businesses safe—through prevention programs, inspections, and enforcement.

Firefighters visit 800 homes annually to stress the need for working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms—the seconds between the alarm sounding and escaping can make the difference between life, injury or death. Residents appreciate the advice about escape routes, the location of the detectors and operability—and last year, firefighters provided 180 detectors to residents. For seniors uncomfortable about climbing a ladder to check or install new detectors or batteries, the Renfrew Fire Department will gladly do it for them.

Renfrew’s Fire Department conducts mandatory inspections and fire drills in buildings providing care, treatment, and accommodations for the vulnerable such as Bonnechere Manor, Quail Creek, Groves Park Lodge, and the Renfrew Victoria Hospital—to verify procedures are in place to safely remove people in the event of an emergency.

Renfrew’s Fire Department had a busy year responding to 202 calls in 2016 including 8 structural fires—6 residential and 2 commercial. As part of a backup emergency service agreement, 11 calls were in Admaston/Bromley and 5 in Horton. The Renfrew Fire Department utilizes a combination of trained professionals—11 full-time and 16 volunteer firefighters.
Maintaining, Repairing and Replacing Infrastructure at the “Right Time”

Making sure day-to-day services are safe and reliable requires a comprehensive approach to determine the “right” time to maintain, repair or replace infrastructure—the building blocks of our community—using available funds.

With over $210 million in infrastructure—roads, bridges, water and sewer pipes, buildings, and fleet—our asset management plan helps us decide when work needs to be done. Factors considered are reliability—age, capacity and condition, cost and risks. Preventative maintenance extends the life of assets.

Local tax dollars are supplemented by pursuing provincial and federal grants and obtaining endorsements from the Renfrew and Area Chamber of Commerce, the Renfrew Downtown BIA, Emergency Services, the County, the Renfrew Industrial Commission, and other stakeholders. See Open Books for more information.

“Shelf ready” and “shovel ready” projects are prepared by undertaking preliminary engineering so the Town is prepared to take advantage of provincial and federal funding—funding that is necessary and appreciated.

2016 Capital Works
Highway 60 (Veterans Memorial Blvd. and O’Brien Rd.)
Town $1.2 million/Ontario $2 million: road rehabilitation, water and sewer pipe repairs, a right-hand turn lane, a multi-use path, a south side concrete sidewalk extension, and street light rewiring.

Plaunt St. S. (Hall Ave., to Railway)
Federal Ontario $1.2 million / Town $650,000: Phase 1—reconstruct the road, aging underground water, sanitary and storm sewers, sidewalks, and a parking lane.

Baldwin St. Reconstruction
Town $426,450 / Ontario $219,800: the final lift of asphalt and landscaping will be completed in 2017.

Water and Sewage Treatment Plants
Ontario’s Clean Water Agency, which runs many municipal plants, will manage the Town’s plants under contract for 10 years. Safe, healthy water, and sufficient volume and pressure for domestic use and fire services will be supplied. Treated wastewater will meet provincial and federal health and safety standards before being returned to the Bonnewechre River.

Solar Roofs: Ma-Te-Way Activity Centre and the Water Filtration Plant
Local electrical contractors did much of the work on this $1.3 million project which included the solar installation as part of the planned roof replacement at Ma-Te-Way Activity Center. Power generated will be sold under contract through the Ontario Feed in Tariff program. Once the systems pay for themselves, funds generated will offset taxation dollars.

Looking forward to 2017
Garbage and Recycling
A joint garbage and recycling tender for the Towns of Renfrew and Amnipe, and the Townships of Horton, and McNab-Braeside is expected to be awarded in late February.

LED Street Light Conversion
The proposed $700,000 street light conversion from high pressure sodium to LED has a payback of six years—a longer life span and lower maintenance costs will reduce energy costs. LEDs are being tested on Fortington St. and Coleraine Dr. The LED conversion project will be funded from energy savings.

Road Reconstruction
The Town has applied for $4.8 million in provincial and federal funding to support this $10.6 million plan. Projects depend on funding.

Community Improvement Plan
Financial incentives will once again be available to businesses planning to improve or redevelop underutilized properties. Visit www.renfrew.ca or just ask us.

The Capital Budget
Council has approved a $6.5 million 2017 Capital Budget. Staff are preparing tender documents now for the projects identified, and will be seeking bids soon. But before tenders are awarded, there is one last step. Council will review the business case and the tenders for each before providing final approval.

Infrastructure projects are funded from federal and provincial grants, and reserve funds the Town sets up for specific uses. Currently, an annual contribution from property taxes of $153,000 is made to reserve funds. See Maintaining, repairing and replacing infrastructure at the “right time” on this page.

The Operating Budget
Very shortly, Council will be reviewing the draft 2017 Operating Budget. This budget includes the day-to-day costs of operating roads, sidewalks and snow removal, waste collection and recycling, landfill operations, by-law enforcement, fire, planning and development, parks and arena operations, police, library, economic development, administration, and other services.

Estimates of revenues and expenses are thoroughly reviewed by committees prior to being consolidated and reviewed by the Finance Committee. Then, the draft budget is presented to Council.

Stabilizing the property tax rate is an important direction. Three agreements, approved by Council, will provide for predictable wage costs until the end of 2019: CUPE Local 121 (Public Works, Recreation and Treasury staff), CUPE Local 121-1 (Library staff) and non-union staff.

A 10-year agreement, signed with the Ontario Clean Water Agency (OWCA) to operate and maintain our modern water and wastewater plants, provides for reasonable and predictable operational costs and will help to stabilize water and waste water rates. That’s key because Ontario expects municipalities to budget and pay for the full cost of providing these services.

For more information on the Budget see: www.renfrew.ca/budget
When you think Renfrew’s Parks and Recreation Department, think Active Living.

Be healthy, regenerate, de-stress and have some plain old-fashioned fun, outdoors. Try these out and get your whole family moving!

The new playground structure at Legion Park located on Munroe Avenue meets Ontario’s Accessibility standards, and features a wood-chip fiber surface, a spider web design, slide, and a spinning cage, sure to inspire. Kids can easily move from one level to another. It was funded by a $32,000 federal grant and the Town.

Your kids are going to get dirty this summer enjoying the natural play area at Ma-te-way Activity Park. There will be lots of rocks, logs and boulders to explore and climb—great for their imagination. This pilot project is sponsored by the County of Renfrew’s Healthy Kids grant and the Recreation Fundraising Committee.

Love cycling and don’t mind a series of bumps and jumps on a regulation BMX track? Count yourself in! The new track, to be built at Ma-te-way Activity Park this spring, will be managed by a volunteer board. Renfrew will provide equipment to construct the track.

Keep the Ball Rolling offers seniors a choice of activities—great ways to stay active and independent!

Love walking, jogging, running, or birdwatching? Experience the 3.4 km wheelchair-accessible Millennium Trail from Barnet Boulevard to Lisgar Street, or Ma-te-way Activity Park’s 2.5 km fitness trail.

The popular gymnastics program is a hit with 4 to 14-year-olds, and our fitness centre is getting a work-out! Want a walk in a park—choose from 15!

Whether you are 8 or 80, lace ’em up or fasten that strap, and get moving. Check it out at www.renfrew.ca.

RENFREW…the place to be!

Economic development is a top priority for Renfrew Council.

Retaining and supporting existing business by providing stable tax rates, reliable infrastructure, environmental stewardship, and the best quality of life possible is as important as inviting new businesses to grow with us.

Working together… we have the benefit of the experience and energy of our Economic Development Committee, the Chamber of Commerce, the downtown BIA, and the Industrial Commission, the County and others. Developing our economy depends on building relationships and partnerships.

We know Renfrew is a great place to start and grow a business, and enjoy family life. We’re just down the road from Ottawa, a hot-bed for tech and innovation, where increasingly, work goes to people—people don’t go to work.

With access to a regional population of 1.25 million, we think it’s time to introduce Renfrew’s excellent quality of life, modern services, competitively-priced homes and land, great shopping, and its backdrop of 100s of fresh water lakes—cottage country, plenty of golf, skiing, and the chance to have one of the top white water rafting experiences in the world to name just a few!

Building the future…living a full life, and welcoming great employment opportunities today and in the future is what this is all about.

Creating our new logo is just one part of our outreach in defining the Town of Renfrew—emboldened by our history and confident about our future as the place to be in the Ottawa Valley!

Want more information? Just ask us. Call us at (613) 432-4848 or visit www.renfrew.ca.

You won’t get “shushed” at the Renfrew Library!

Have a coffee—it’s only a buck, or a conversation, read a magazine or newspaper, borrow a book—there’s audio and large print too. Check out our many online databases.

Can’t get to the Library, visit http://www.renfrew.ca/library 24/7 to reserve your title, download an e-book, or magazines using Flipster or use Mango Learning to learn a new language. If you are at Quail Creek, Bonnechere Manor, or require materials to be delivered, we’ll come to you.

Connect to the library’s WiFi or use one of the six public terminals. Don’t know how and want to learn about technology and tools—from cell phones to social media? There’s Tech Tuesdays.

Anyone can publish on the web. Can you tell what’s good information and what’s not? Talk to our professionally-trained librarians about how to find quality information.

The popular early literacy programs, the Lego Club, the Homework Club, and the TD Summer Reading programs come with a huge serving of fun. Book clubs, movie nights, trivia nights, Renfrew Reads…take your pick! Try Makey Makey—turn everyday objects into a touch pad and create games and stories, or Little Bits—kids become inventors using electronic building blocks!

We’re taking the library outdoors using Explorer Backpacks—loaded with books, binoculars, butterfly nets and geocaching information—grab your smart phone and start exploring. If you like, you can borrow a bicycle, a set of Nordic pole or snowshoes!

Renfrew Library…a place to connect, a place to create, a place to hang out. It’s free, it’s accessible and it’s the great equalizer! We’re on Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest and Instagram.